loward Mumford Jones Reviews Ellen Glasgow's New Novel

The Saturday Review of Literature

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EIGHT NOVELISTS BETWEEN WARS
By Joseph W. Beach

"THE CORRESPONDENCE OF MR. JUSTICE HOLMES AND SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK"
Edited by Mark DeWolfe Howe
Reviewed by James Reid Parker

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By Carl Purington Rollins

"CANTINA"
By Kim Schee
Reviewed by Herbert J. Muller

S. J. Woolf

ELLEN GLASGOW: "In the whole history of the American novel, there is no achievement quite like hers." *(See page 5)*

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The Saturday Review of Literature

Eight Novelists Between Wars

JOSEPH WARREN BEACH

Last week the SRL *published "Fashions in Defeatism," by Van Wyck Brooks, which criticized the role of the cynic in contemporary fiction. The following article, which is a preview of "American Literature: 1920-1940," to be published by The Macmillan Co., views the "cynics" in another light.*

THE vast mass of popular fiction makes, and has ever made, its appeal to uncritical sentiment. The plots are so contrived as to gratify the cravings of the heart. The characters are so conceived as to rouse disgust, where they are villains, and, where they are sympathetic, to feed the reader's appetite for nobility, for wit, refinement, altruism, intelligence, and resourcefulness. All romantic stories are success stories; and the reader who identifies himself with the hero or heroine has the gratification of vicariously realizing his ideals and attaining the object of his ambitions. Such fiction serves, no doubt, its useful function in the human economy. It is one of the most innocuous forms of entertainment and diversion; and the provision of such forms of entertainment is one of the most crying needs of urban life. They lend their glamour to drab and commonplace lives, and give heart to readers depressed by what they have seen of the world. I would not think of discouraging the production or consumption of this trashy fiction any more than I would the production and consumption of moving pictures.

I go to the movies a good deal myself and have no apologies to make for that way of passing an evening. It is a form of relaxation as salutary for the tired scholar as for the tired businessman. It is even conceivable that the sentimental trashiness of our popular drama works unconsciously to determine the direction of serious fiction —by which I mean the work of our clever men who are aiming at something more than sales. It may be partly by reaction from the taste of the vulgar as shown in our most popular art form that our best novelists lean over backwards in their avoidance of sentimentalism and the pseudo-refinements of bourgeois taste. Now, let me say at once that the authors whom I am featuring as representative of present-day fiction are not necessarily such as I would have summoned out of the void had I been the Proteus of American fiction. Nourished as I was on Dickens and Trollope and Hawthorne, on James and Hardy and Tolstoy—fond as I am, among present-day writers, of Marcel Proust and Thomas Mann and André Malraux—it is unlikely that I should have had the hardihood, not to say the imagination, to have conceived of Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner, of Thomas Wolfe and John Steinbeck, or John Dos Passos or Erskine Caldwell, or J. P. Marquand or James T. Farrell, as standard-bearers of our cultural effort.

Now they are very much with us; they are the voices of our day, and we cannot deny them. Each one of them I have chosen to discuss has a marked and individual accent, giving esthetic definition to all his offering, and that

—*Candidisraeli*

John Steinbeck, says Mr. Beach, is "too fond of men to be a cynic."

precious air of being selective. Let it be the corrosive irony of Dos Passos, the weighted understatement of Hemingway, the conscious naïveté of Caldwell; let it be the nervous intensity, the rush and incandescence of Faulkner or the lyrical Gargantuan extravagance of Wolfe—even where these qualities are present in excess, even where they lead the author at times along the perilous edge of absurdity—in every case there is something to give the individual stamp of art to the neutral stuff of common observation. It is the mind that is working, but never the mind in its purely scientific and colorless apprehension of truth. It is the mind humanized by emotion and implemented with the rhetoric of feeling. Irony and naiveté are forms of wit; they give point and savor to what might be unimpressive in direct statement.

Even the stark objectivity of Farrell —his bleak, unvarnished recording of things said and done, of brutality, stupidity, obscenity, and silliness—even this seemingly photographic method involves the art of self-restraint, self-suppression, so hard for any conscious creator to observe—and from it all, from a narrative in which the author never once appears, there emanates a strong savor of his personal attitude, a sense of the cold fury of loathing with which he contemplates the cultural purgatory from which he made himself so narrow an escape. The very force of the mind, where we are specially conscious of that, as in Jonathan Swift or Michelangelo—to leave for a moment the field of fiction—this is not properly force of mind but force within the mind, power manifesting itself in the operations of the mind. The drive itself comes from the personality, from above or below the mind; the drive is furnished by the sense of values and importance in concepts of the mind, but it is not from the mind that we have our sense of values.

In all these writers we are impressed by their freedom and boldness in dealing with life and character. This boldness is again an esthetic, an emo-

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tional quality. There is a kind of ruthlessness or cruelty in their treatment of human nature. Many readers will think this is overdone. They will think it unkind or immoral to tell the truth too nakedly; or they will think that these men give a partial and one-sided view of the truth. And very likely they are right in this last judgment, though they may not be right in condemning this school of writers for being one-sided and partial. It may simply mean that with true artistic instinct they have selected from the social scene, or from certain parts of it, what seems to them most characteristic or what lends itself most naturally to esthetic representation. The rest they leave out of the picture in order not to confuse the effect. And that may be one reason why these men interest us more steadily than certain others who, in the interest of fairness and comprehensiveness, have crowded their canvas with figures that will not come to life and only serve to give a messy effect to the whole.

And that is not all. These writers, like powerful artists in all times, are concerned to render what we may call the very essence of human experience. And for this purpose they have need of characters and incidents that are perhaps more sensational than the average. The peculiarities of human nature are best exhibited in extreme cases. It is about vice and crime that moral problems cluster most thickly. Pedestrian virtue was always notoriously hard to make interesting in literature. Great fiction, great drama, was always too strong meat for squeamish readers. They were as much distressed with the grossness of Ben Jonson, Fielding, and Sterne, as they are with that of Hemingway or Steinbeck. American literature has definitely passed out of its Victorian phase, and we need not be surprised to find our writers making liberal use of their new freedom. It would have been so, no doubt, if there had never been a World War, a feminist movement, a Freud, a Marx, or a Darwin. But all these things have been. It is not the world of Scott and Thackeray into which these men are born, above all not the same world of the mind. And before considering them individually, it will pay us to take account of certain attitudes common to them all which are directly referable to the times in which they write. These are our own times, and these men are the product of the world we have made.

THE most important common feature of American fiction today is that it has all been produced in the interval between two world wars, each one of them greater in scope than the wars following the French Revolution of 1789, and far more disastrous in their effects than those Napoleonic wars. One of these men took part in the fighting as officer of field artillery in France (Marquand), one as member of the Canadian Flying Corps and the British Air Force in France (Faulkner), one as a member of the Italian Arditi (Hemingway), one as a private in the Medical Corps (Dos Passos); two of them also saw service in the ambulance and Red Cross service (Dos Passos and Hemingway). Of the younger men, one viewed the war from the point of view of a college student (Wolfe), and the others from those of schoolboys, farm hands, mill hands, football players (Steinbeck, Caldwell, Farrell). I think we may say that all of them have viewed the first World War with the same horror and dismay; that they all have shared the same doubts as to the ideology that inspired it and that led to our participation in it, the same disgust with that world-wide commercial spirit which was so largely responsible for it, and the same loathing for those traits of human nature which have allowed the dominance of this commercial spirit throughout the civilized world. The disillusionment with human nature, which was already so common among intellectuals before the war, became, we might almost say, universal with them as a result of it.

Few of these men have written extensively about the war; but the first World War was the greatest single cause (among many) of an attitude toward human nature in general which is the most obvious feature of serious contemporary American fiction. Various as are the talents and methods of these men, and various as are the fields in which human nature is shown by them in action, they are at one in their disposition to show it in a distinctly unflattering light. In their general view of it they are uncompromising realists in the historical sense of that term. They are determined not to be taken in by the claims of the heart and the imagination, by man's pretensions to be heroic.

It would be a mistake to bracket these eight writers as plain cynics. One or two of them, when you look close, would seem to be too fond of men in their natural state for that—would seem indeed to be convinced of the essential goodness of human beings—or if goodness is too special a word, then of their essential likableness, or, as we might say, their innocence of evil. Such is the case with Steinbeck, and sometimes with Hemingway. On the whole, however, these writers show men behaving rather disappointingly—rather meanly—and the impression conveyed is that they must inevitably behave rather meanly in the conditions

(*Continued on page* 17)

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Product of the Tragic Muse

IN THIS OUR LIFE. By Ellen Glasgow. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1941. 467 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

YOU can, if you like, remark familiar patterns in the warp and woof of "In This Our Life," which brings Miss Glasgow's social history of Virginia down to the present. You can say that you have met some of these persons before. Asa Timberlake, the unheroic, shabby-genteel father, compounded of suffering and steel—was he not in "Vein of Iron?" His daughter Stanley, feminine, futile, and disastrous, is sister under the skin to Jennie Birdsong of "The Sheltered Life." Her mother, Lavinia, is the sentimental petted invalid of other novels. Uncle William is the hoary masculine sinner for whom Miss Glasgow has a fictional partiality; Aunt Charlotte is his placid but not unsubtle wife for whom he has a strong personal respect. They have been displayed before—in "The Romantic Comedians," for example. You may learnedly comment that Queenborough is Richmond, a town where God fails to fulfill himself in many ways. You may even complain, if you are a close reader, that some of the events are too palpably prepared for.

But these are irrelevant observations, the sort of thing English departments welcome in graduate students as proof they are not ignorant of literary history. What is essential and important about "In This Our Life" is that the themes of the twenty books which Miss Glasgow has devoted to Queenborough and to Virginia are here swept into a final symphony, a tragic orchestral poem which is yet lambent with unearthly wisdom, an iridescent inward light. Miss Glasgow's pages are still vibrant with humor and scorn, they still march and move at the command of an expert stylist. They do so, I think, because, although she has not lost curiosity, she long ago won serenity. She knows that man is the captive of this earth. But she knows also that he is not.

In 1941 the foremost woman in the South exhibits the unflagging curiosity about the sources of human frailty she first showed when, a learned girl, she wrote those early crudities, "The Descendant" and "Phases of an Inferior Planet." Fresh from the reading of evolutionary science, she thought in the nineteenth century that character was the product of heredity and environment. But she refused even then to admit that it was merely the product of heredity and environment. Morals, she held then and held since, are not synonymous with *mores*. Now in the twentieth century this distinguished moralist knows that character ought to be something more than the product of heredity and environment, but that frequently it is not.

IN the days of Mencken Miss Glasgow once announced that what the South needed was more blood and irony. Bewitched by a formula so simple, shoals of Southern novelists set to work to misinterpret this golden phrase. Most of them have been unable to distinguish blood from bloodiness. Most of them have showed a singular aptitude for confusing what is tragic with what is terrible. They have confounded irony with iconoclasm. For them, culture below the Potomac meant the exploitation of the uncultivated. They not merely announced the demise of romanticism, they held a literary lynching bee and strung up the corpse. Somewhere in Masefield's "Dauber" there is a line: "Spit brown, my boy, and get a hairy chest." This is what many writers in the Sahara of the Bozarts understood by irony and blood in their efforts to make that desert blossom with their blows.

Miss Glasgow, alone among the barbarians, has been a moralist of the classic order. She never confounded Masefield with Thoreau. "I wished," wrote the Concord sage," to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life." "I wanted," he said, "to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life . . . to drive life into a corner, and reduce it to its lowest terms, and, if it proved to be mean, why then to get the whole and genuine meanness of it, and publish its meanness to the world." It is nowhere recorded that Thoreau set fire to his cabin or bashed in the head of Farmer Hosmer with an axe. Driving life into a corner in order to inspect its meanness is not the same thing as driving life into a trap. Tragedy is not a problem of violence, it is a problem of values.

Drawing from "Ellen Glasgow," by Dorothea L. Mann.

It ought not be necessary to enunciate these simple and oracular truths. But there is a vague feeling abroad that Miss Glasgow is outmoded because she did not stroll down "Tobacco Road." It is not, however, Miss Glasgow who is out of date. The difficulty is not going back to her, the difficulty is to catch up with her. What shall we say of a spirit so rare that, as it nears its seventh decade, it is still seeking to live deep and suck all the marrow of life? When shall we have a criticism civilized enough to accept the truth that the ironist and the social comedian are simply other aspects of one who has been haunted by the tragic sense? Social revolutions sweep across the face of the planet, but the old enigma remains—what price men and women?

"In This Our Life" is a product of the tragic muse. Its motto might be that simple and startling sentence with which Thackeray concluded "Vanity Fair": "Which of us is happy in this world? Which of us has his desire? or, having it, is satisfied?" The book is as subtle as that. In the Timberlake family two marriages go wrong because, by the law of her being, Stanley Timberlake cannot be other than the eternal feminine. The repercussions of her sexuality shake a whole family for the simple and sufficient reason that sexuality is beyond good and evil. But are men and women beyond good and evil? Civilization is compounded of good and evil, but the paradox is: whose good? whose evil? While reformatory novelists have assumed that Southern society must be revolutionized if a single soul is to be saved, Miss Glasgow has quietly announced that the most revolutionary thing in any society would be for some one to save his own soul. Pending that salvation, the only anodyne is a half tender, half mocking stoicism.

"In This Our Life" is distinguished writing. I think the middle portion not as good as the other parts, I think the novel not quite of the calibre of either "Vein of Iron" or "Barren Ground." But "In This Our Life" is not so much a work of fiction as it is a testament, a summary, a philosophy, a belief. The wisest woman in

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the South has written her commentary upon us, and we do not yet know how profound that commentary is. Beyond stoicism lies serenity, but beyond serenity lies mischief. Most of our novelists have not yet attained stoicism, and consequently have no comic sense.

There are a great many things in the life of Virginia which Miss Glasgow has ignored. She deals but little with the South Side, with the mill towns and the great ports and industrial centers, with the apple industry or coal mining or the railroad. She has written little or nothing about the "new Americans," her books being cognizant of but two races—the Anglo-Saxon and that portion of the Negro populace which comes under the classification of household servants. It is, however, impossible to reconstruct the economic structure of Elsinore from "Hamlet," and I do not regard "Othello" as documentary sociological evidence about race relations in the island of Cyprus. The mocking mischief of the comic spirit, the insight of the tragic muse—their subject must ever be the ardors and endurances of humanity, not economic determinism or the yearbooks of the department of agriculture. The traditional culture of Virginia has sufficed for Miss Glasgow, as the traditional culture of the English country house sufficed for Miss Austen. Let others do the big bow-wow strain.

American fiction has power, but it lacks finesse. Novelists burn with admirable zeal as they write their essays to do good, but they do not always pause to inquire what good is being done. The phantom of the Great American Novel still haunts the publishing houses, who look upon fiction as the modern epic. But the novel, said Fielding, is a comic epic in prose. It is a singular fact that our two most settled and continuing regions, Virginia and New England, should have brought forth the two contemporary novelists who have best understood what Fielding meant. Mr. Marquand and Miss Glasgow are, in the French sense, moralists. Unlike Mr. Marquand, Miss Glasgow has devoted herself to the social morality of a single state, so that, in the whole history of the American novel, there is no achievement quite like hers. Some call her a novelist of manners only. But in her view manners are but the outward and visible sign (often misleading) of an inward and spiritual grace.

The next issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature* will be the annual Spring Announcement Number. The 1941 winner of *The Saturday Review* "Award for Distinguished Service to American Letters" will be announced.

Sans Serif

JOHNSON WITHOUT BOSWELL. Edited by Hugh Kingsmill. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1941. 306 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

AS has been noticed before, "for the true believer nothing can replace the Gospel according to St. James." The lesser Acts and Epistles, not to mention an occasional fiery Revelation, whether apocryphal or not, are, it is true, full of interest and often of corroboration. And in this instance Mr. Kingsmill has woven them together with superlative and unobtrusive editorial art. But it is no particular satisfaction to this reviewer that Boswell is not one of an otherwise delightful party.

This is not to decry what was well worth undertaking. From Sir John Hawkins, from Mrs. Thrale, from Anna Seward, from Fanny Burney, from Johnson's letters and prayers, and from other sources, Mr. Kingsmill has skillfully put together a beautifully articulated story, which tells itself extremely well without visible intrusion on the part of the editor. The hanks of autobiographical silk have been twisted into a first-rate life of Samuel Johnson. And unlike the cord-messages of Inca Kings this literary quipu is understandable and delightful, and singularly in harmony with James Boswell. Though there is hardly anything in the book which is not to be found somewhere in Birkbeck Hill's Johnsoniana (which Mr. Kingsmill honorably and gracefully is at pains to acknowledge) the arrangement is all the editor's own and is absolutely creative in its ingenious contrasts and illuminations. The reviewer cannot see how the materials could have been better put together and makes his best compliments to good taste and admirable critical acuteness. In short the book is an original and enchanting running comment on the greatest biography in any language.

From "Things New & Old," by Max Beerbohm (Doubleday Doran).
Johnson and Boswell

Beyond that it is a complete knock-down refutation of the silly and inexpensive heresy to the effect that Johnson was an empty pomposity kept afloat in the general lapse of literature by the genius of Boswell. Like its fellow heresy that Boswell was a congenital idiot kept afloat by the genius of Johnson, this absurdity for some reason is rampant among those critics who never read Johnson or Boswell either. The reviewer is in full agreement in this connection with Mr. T. S. Eliot who rightly believes that Johnson was a very great poet indeed. Nor is it too much to say that no one has written better prose than Johnson could when he wanted to. The contrary-minded may laugh off the two great introductions, if they dare. Such courage will indicate that, like the Grand Inquisitor, they are not quite up to the intellectual pressure. And Mr. Kingsmill's book makes it quite clear why a great personality has been projected into our century and will be projected beyond. Even if Johnson were to vanish in Post-Hitlerian barbarism, it would later be necessary, in the old phrase, to invent him, as God and Austria will have to be invented once more. In spite of this statement we feel that he needs the attentions of his affable, familiar, Caledonian ghost —or rather that we do.

Though Fanny Burney "has pages the equal of Boswell in his pride of place, she only has pages." Though Mrs. Thrale can show the hero at disadvantage, with Burke thrown into the disaster for good measure, she lacks the strength of wing. Though the lesser witnesses bring much, for instance the superb characterization of Levet whose "appearance and behavior disgusted the rich and terrified the poor," the fact remains that the loins of the lot of them together have less, "whether of gravity or levity," than the little finger of the drunken neurotic of Great Portland Street.

In the opinion of the reviewer, the book, illuminating and charming as it is, does more for Boswell than for Johnson. It is one more tribute to his invincible abilities. The reader, like Harry Hotspur, throws many a northward look—in the general direction of Edinburgh. Once more, "to set the cliché clashing," he feels that when there is a party at Elsinore, the unexpected absence of the Prince of Denmark is bound to be the subject of remark.

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The Skeptic and the Scholar

HOLMES-POLLOCK LETTERS: The Correspondence of Mr. Justice Holmes and Sir Frederick Pollock. 1874-1932. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1941. 2 *vols.* 580 *pp., with index.* $7.50.

FOR fifty-eight years two of the greatest minds of our time exchanged letters. Now that these are published, enriching the literature of America and England with something instantly recognizable as fine and permanent, we are admitted to the companionship of Oliver Holmes the younger, and Frederick Pollock, and a welcome event it is. It is to be hoped that a newly-announced Holmes biographer, the highly reliable Catherine Drinker Bowen, will have access to much additional Holmesiana now in the possession of John Gorham Palfrey, the Justice's executor and legatee; but undoubtedly it is in the amazing correspondence between the English scholar and the American skeptic that we shall find Holmes at his magnificent best, writing of life, law, and literature, the three themes he found endlessly engaging.

His brother across the Atlantic was a very different man. To Pollock, books, especially the heritage from Athens and Rome, were perhaps more absorbing than people, in contradistinction to Holmes's tastes, for the American frankly declared that he considered the classics dead. He kept reading them, of course, but at ninety he still persisted in his opinion that the world of the moment and of the future mattered more. None of this precluded a friendship between two men who essentially were brothers, and who loved the law and each other.

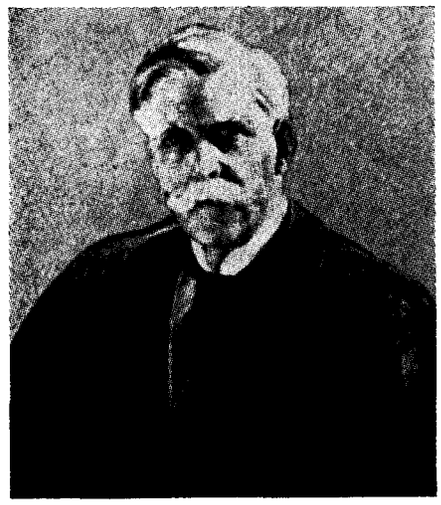
Scholar though Pollock was, it is Holmes's part of the correspondence that wins the greater glory. For Holmes had more vitality; more—to use a word O. W. H. himself liked—more *fist*. More sensitiveness, too, and Pollock had his share of this quality. Together they give us five hundred and eighty pages, every one of which abounds in lines that deserve to be quoted. They will be, too. Future court opinions will borrow luster from them, and books of literary criticism will be the better for Holmes-Pollock fragments interspersed here and there. Certainly the one line from Holmes's pen that our children can be counted on to treasure above anything else he ever said or write is the one that appears in a letter written after his wife died, in 1929: "For sixty years she made life poetry for me."

Admittedly the first volume will be of primary interest to lawyers, and the second volume of primary interest to the layman. The first chances to be chiefly an interchange of opinion on vexing points of law, and polishes many of the rough facets of debatable cases. But the lawyer and the layman will find their paths crossing. The first book says much about life and letters quite removed from the law, and the second is crowded with juridical memoranda and comment.

Holmes, the champion of civil liberties, is particularly interesting when he writes of social change. His great dissent in the Gitlow case is illuminated here with the line to Pollock: "My last performance . . . (a dissent in which Brandeis joined) in favor of the rights of an anarchist (so-called) to talk drool in favor of the proletarian dictatorship." For Holmes himself, nothing was less to his taste "than Hegel and political economy." Repeatedly he took care to make his position in these matters clear to Pollock.

> If I didn't believe that socialism rested on dramatic contrasts and not on a consideration of what changes it could be expected to make in the the nature or distribution of the stream of products, I should listen to it with more respect. But the argument never gets much farther than look at the big house and the little one. It never becomes quantitative, asking how much does the tax levied by the rich for the pleasures of the few amount to. . . .

But this is a man who was a friend to the oppressed, especially when they were victims of the economy that Holmes felt could never be renovated with success, except, as he said, by taking life itself in hand. Pollock, concurring, admitted that the wealth of the few struck him as being merely glittering shavings from a huge machine, and not the machine itself. Both men regretted the deceptive quality of the glitter, and its effect upon amateurs of economics.



From the painting by Charles S. Hopkinson
Mr. Justice Holmes

Regarding other matters: "I knew Henry Adams quite well," Holmes wrote. "He had two sides. He had distinction, great ability, and great kindness. When I happened to fall in with him on the street he could be delightful, but when I called at his house and he was posing to himself as the old cardinal he would turn everything to dust and ashes." Pose of every kind goes down before the rapier in these letters. Where Pollock dismissed it with weary contempt, Holmes happily fought it. "I was much amused," he wrote in 1924, "by a question of taste yesterday. In one of my opinions I give a short account of a statute and say that there are amplifications 'to stop rat holes' that need not be stated. . . . The C. J. criticised. I said our reports were dull because we had the notion that judicial dignity required solemn fluffy speech, as, when I grew up, everybody wore black frock coats and black cravats (I didn't say that to them.) I didn't care for the phrase but do for the principle." As to Shakespeare, Holmes marveled that a few golden words should float so much quibble. Plato reeked with platitudes. In short, take away your ancients. Over and over Holmes complained that they are limited by their times, by an awareness of little more than first principles. He insisted that their ideas were plain, objective, and basic, like the bark of a dog, and that we who live in a room that is all mirrors must not look back to antiquity for our courage and our faith.

But with the observation that each man has his different system, he did not war with Pollock. He warred with others, though, from the Bard and the Bible ("the two books that editorial stupidity, bad arrangement, and perverse tradition have made the hardest for the general reader to enjoy with understanding") to Bergson ("a humbug agreeably pinned to paper by Santayana"). When he sheathed his sword, and loved—when he was enjoying the pleasures of his home and his profession—his letters were equally graphic. He wrote about every conceivable aspect of life and work, and here is the compendium.

Unreserved praise must be accorded to Mark DeWolfe Howe, the editor, for his careful and loving work, and to Mr. Palfrey, for his most illuminating introduction.

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The Saturday Review
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RESPONSIBILITY AND THE REVIEWER

A RECENT issue of the *London Times* reaching this country carries a report of a successful action for libel on February 10 growing out of a book review. The case, almost certain to establish something of a precedent in English law, involved the famous literary trio, Edith, Osbert, and Sacheverell Sitwell, and the publisher of the *Reynolds News,* British weekly. The Sitwells claimed damages —and collected approximately $5,000 —because of a review in that paper by Hamilton Fyfe of the book, "Edith Sitwell's Anthology." This is the portion of Mr. Fyfe's review to which the Sitwells objected:

> Among the literary curiosities left by the nineteen-twenties will be the vogue of the Sitwells, sister and two brothers, whose energy and self-assurance pushed them into a position which their merits could not have won. One brother wrote amusing political verse. The sister produced a Life of Alexander Pope. Now oblivion has claimed them, and they are remembered with a kindly, if slightly cynical, smile.
>
> Miss Edith Sitwell has been occupied in collecting her favorite pieces of poetical writing and has published 812 pages of them in "Edith Sitwell's Anthology" Gollanoz, 7s 6d). It would be a delightful bedbook if it were not so heavy to hold. The 160 pages of "critical introduction" might well be omitted from future editions.

According to the *London Times,* the publisher of the *Reynolds News* was content to allow the review speak for itself and offered no additional evidence, claiming "fair comment"; neither did Mr. Fyfe take the stand. On the other hand, all three of the Sitwells took turns in the witness box, claiming they had been seriously injured in their character, credit, reputation, and occupation. The review, they declared, meant that they were persons of no literary ability whose arrogance and conceit constituted their sole claim to prominence.

The decision of the court resulted in a sweeping victory for the Sitwells. Mr. Justice Cassells pointed out that whatever the merits of Miss Sitwell's book, the fact remained that the reviewer had used her book as an opportunity for an attack not only on the author but on the other Sitwells as well. Sentence by sentence, the judge analyzed the review in relation to the evidence produced in court, finding that Mr. Fyfe had invited the reading public to believe that "the realm of oblivion had thrown open its doors to the plaintiffs, that they were in a kind of literary limbo," while the "facts proved that the three plaintiffs had been almost prolific in the literary activities right up to 1940." Moreover, said the judge, the passage could hardly be called a "review," since it contained only two observations about Miss Sitwell's book; first, that it was too heavy to hold as a bedbook, and, secondly, that the portion of the book written by Miss Sitwell might well have been omitted. All in all, concluded Judge Cassels, the review constituted defamation of character and ability. Addressing himself to the publisher of the *Reynolds News,* he pointed out that an apology in the columns of his paper might not be sufficient reparation, since it was possible that all readers who read the libel might not come across the retraction, and directed equal payment for damages to each of the Sitwells.

Not having seen Miss Sitwell's book, it is of course impossible to pass upon the merits of the work. Yet the case itself may not be without significance for American publishers, authors, and reviewers. Thus far the American book reviewer has operated on more or less privileged ground, alloting to himself —and receiving—an immunity not shared by writers in other fields. A not inconsiderable portion of contemporary reviewing has been of an "everything-goes" nature. Frequently the appearance of a new book serves as a signal for a general attack not only on the book but on the author, his motives, and his background.

Even disregarding the possibility that some American authors, taking their cue from the Sitwells, may attempt to establish a similar precedent here in order to hold reviewers to account for their statements, this is as good a time as any to re-examine the function and techniques of reviewing with an eye toward setting up boundaries of fair play. This does not mean that reviewers should in any way modify their opinions of books, however severe those criticisms may be. Nor does it mean that reviews must be written without flavor. But the quality of a review is not improved if the reviewer uses it as a springboard for unwarranted or unjustified criticism beyond the book itself. The critic who is tempted to use vitriol instead of ink should do more than count ten before leaping to the attack; it behooves him to remember that he is setting out to demolish in a few minutes what may be the result of many months or years of work. As soon as he strays beyond material pertinent to the book at hand and into random criticism or abuse, he strays into literary irredenta where irresponsible, inaccurate, or unjust statements, if provable as such, should be open to the same instruments of retaliation as any other form of writing.

And even if it is legal, it isn't good reviewing.

N. C.

Home Is Where

By Louis Hasley

LIGHTS that have been on all day in offices
begin to vanish, one by one. The bitter January
has been forgotten since morning, with lunch in
the house cafeteria.
The last typist scatters a few pit-a-pat-pats on the
inert air
closes her desk, rushes to catch her girl friend in
the washroom.
All over the city, men rise from their chairs, button
their coats, and say:
"That other matter, Miss Brown, will have to wait
till tomorrow."
At 5:05 stepping into the elevator goodbye to all that . . .
With tired shoulders they go forth to live
heart singing, body crying, rest.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Reviews vs. Ads

SIR:—Mr. Sloane's rather wistful lament over the state of poetry publishing [*SRL,* Mar. 15] never revealed how completely publishers depend upon reviews rather than advertisements to sell their wares. During February, *The Nation* and *The Saturday Review of Literature* published one poem and four poems respectively, and printed seven poetry reviews each (besides an article on poetry in the *SRL*). Notwithstanding the fact that eleven of the fourteen books of poetry reviewed were published by companies with normal advertising budgets, there was not a single ad in either magazine for a book of verse. Inasmuch as most reviews were unenthusiastic, if not hostile, any such expenditure might reasonably seem foolhardy.

FREDERICK I. OLSON.
Cambridge, Mass.

A Treasury of Titles

SIR:—I am writing an essay on the poetry of A. E. Housman and, in studying the influences of his work on modern literature I find an odd and intriguing fact. That is, many novelists have borrowed Housman's phrases for titles of their own books.

Such sharply differing writers as James T. Farrell, who took lines from Housman for his "A World I Never Made" and "No Star Is Lost," and James Gray, author of "Shoulder the Sky," and Flannery Lewis, who wrote "Brooks Too Broad for Leaping"—all found Housman reflecting in a passage what they took novels to write.

If there are any titles I may have overlooked, I would appreciate hearing from *SRL* readers, who know both Housman and the modern novel.

HAROLD U. RIBALOW.
2922 Barnes Avenue
Bronx, N. Y.

"Crusader in Crinoline"

SIR:—I note with much concern in *Trade Winds,* in a recent *SRL,* several misstatements of fact credited to Forrest Wilson, author of the forthcoming biography of Harriet Beecher Stowe, "Crusader in Crinoline."

It might be well to point out that McMillan STREET and Foraker AVENUE are parallel, separated by five city blocks, but the house in question is still standing on *Gilbert* Avenue at Foraker, where it was erected in 1832 for Lyman Beecher, first president of Lane Theological Seminary, (Presbyterian). Harriet Beecher's husband, Professor Calvin Stowe, taught there also.

Dr. Lyman Beecher left Cincinnati in 1852 and the house was rented for a time. The Rev. J. G. Monfort bought it in 1865 and occupied it. In his will, which my mother witnessed, the house was left to his daughter, Mrs. Margaret Monfort Moorehead. After his death a son, the Rev. F. C. Monfort (also a Presbyterian Divine, one time pastor of the historic Old First Church and editor and publisher for many years of the "Herald and Presbyter"), purchased it from his sister and made his home there until his death in 1928.

The house is now the property of his daughter, Mary E. Monfort. Only yesterday she told my mother she had never heard of "a movement to buy the house, and turn it into a Museum," but she would be more than happy to sell it for such a purpose.

Harriet Beecher married Calvin Stowe in 1836. Shortly thereafter, Lane Theological Seminary sent him abroad for a year, to study methods of teaching. Their first children, twins, were born in the old Beecher home, for Mrs. Stowe had gone to stay with her father while her husband was away.

About 1872 while visiting in Cincinnati, Harriet Beecher Stowe called upon the Rev. J. G. Monfort in her father's old home. It was then she told him many of the character sketches were written in that very house, while she was living with her father for a time, which she latter incorporated in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." They were written in the old library for the most part she said, though some she wrote as she sat on the steps of the porch, watching her children play. Of course it is a well known fact that the actual manuscript of the complete book was written in Brunswick, Maine.

DEBORAH HIGBEE HOGARTH.
2410 Ashland Avenue,
Walnut Hills,
Cincinnati, Ohio

"Look what I found!"

"Fashions in Defeatism"

SIR:—Surely Mr. Van Wyck Brooks (*SRL,* March 22) doesn't need to be told by a whippersnapper like me that the expression of weary futility he sees on the literary face of our sad contemporaries—Odets, Faulkner, Hemingway, Dos Passos, *et al*—is the same expression Shelley saw on an image of Pallas in Florence. Of that visage Shelley wrote:

> "It is indeed divine, as Wisdom
> pleading earnestly with Power,
> and invested with the expression
> of that grief because it must
> ever plead so vainly."

Does Mr. Brooks forget that Dos Passos wrote *Three Soldiers* after the last one?

TIFFANY THAYER.
New York.

Information, Please

SIR:—I am hunting up records of my grandfather, the Rev. Charles Gillette, who was born and educated in Connecticut and came to Texas as a *foreign* missionary for the Episcopal Church in 1843. He remained in Texas until 1865 and was influential as an educator as well as a clergyman. His Unionist sympathy during the Civil War made him then (and still) what I have heard called here "cactus."

I am seeking any letters or papers from or about him. If anyone has such papers, will they let me know either at my permanent home address, 35 Garden Place, Brooklyn, New York, or until April 15, here in Austin, Texas, at 2623 Salado Street? Anything that may be loaned will be promptly copied and returned.

RUTH GILLETTE HARDY.
Austin, Texas.

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Slate from "Indian Art of the United States."

Art of the Indian

INDIAN ART OF THE UNITED STATES. By Frederic H. Douglas and René d' Harnoncourt. New York: The Museum of Modern Art. 1941. 220 *pp.* 216 *plates.* $3.50.

Reviewed by OLIVER LA FARGE

THIS book is issued in connection with the exhibition of Indian Art at the Museum of Modern Art, but it goes—by the deliberate intention of the authors—far beyond the limitations even of a descriptive and critical catalogue. Mr. d'Harnoncourt, as manager of the United States Indian Arts and Crafts Board, has been working for years to effect, not a sentimentalist's renaissance, but a practical, economically sound reëntry of the usable elements of Indian art into our general pattern. This effort lies back of his magnificent exhibit at the San Francisco Fair, and the New York exhibition. In it Mr. Douglas, a scientist of high standing, has been his close collaborator. It was to be expected then, that given the Museum's willingness to publish a book parallel to the exhibition, they would spread themselves.

The "catalogue" tradition confined them to the material actually shown in the Museum for their illustrations, it forced upon them the convention that the book, permanent in intention, must be close related, must indeed be usable as a handbook, to a display which is purely transitory. In effect this has meant that the illustrations fail to show the best material where the exhibition likewise fails—for instance, in Navajo silver—and are strongest where the exhibition is strongest—as in Northwest masks.

But despite this the authors have achieved a real success. Indian art has been the subject of so much sentimentalization and curio-exploitation as to render the subject nauseating to many people of sound, sophisticated esthetic sense. Douglas and d'Harnoncourt lift the subject out of all that. Successfully, and with considerable daring, they have cast off not only the sentimental approach, but also the dead hand of anthropology. They have developed an artist's classification of their material which will continue to be used in the future, a classification based on the outstanding artistic technique of each area and period. They have presented the ever-changing, evolving, adaptable, protean art of the Indians sanely, reasonably, for what it is and no more. Because the presentation is not argued, but quietly factual, and because it is the work of men who combine the wide, detailed information of the scientist with the hard, practical experience of present day promotion, and both with integrity and sensitivity, the result is the best explanation of why Indian art is worth serious attention that has yet been offered.

It is also a readable, clear account of the artistic history and possibilities of a race. It is a layman's book, untechnical, and easy to read consecutively. It succeeds in taking masses of material and reducing them to a simple, logical order which enables any intelligent person to keep the whole well set in mind.

No work of this kind can be perfect. "Indian Art of the United States" suffers, as I have said above, from the catalogue tradition. It is too narrowly tied to the material actually shown, and to some extent overloaded by the requirement of discussing individual specimens where more general, broad discussion illuminated by the silent illustration would have been preferable. Also, humanly and understandably, the authors' predilection for certain periods and styles gives the book an occasional, mild unbalance. These are minor faults. The book will stand as the definitive popular work on the subject.

There are two hundred and sixteen plates in this book, of which sixteen are in full color. In view of its purpose, and that it is published by the Museum of Modern Art, one is surprised to find the color plates poor if not bad.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 365)

GEORGE GISSING
*NEW GRUB STREET**

The struggle for existence among books is nowadays as severe as among men. . . . It's only by volume of shouting that the ear of the public is held. . . . Besides, . . . the growing flood of literature swamps everything but works of primary genius.

*(1891)

Mexicana

CANTINA. By Kim Schee. New York: Coward-McCann, Inc. 1941. 178 *pp.* $1.75.

MEXICO: A New Spain with Old Friends. By J. B. Trend. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1941. 185 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by HERBERT J. MULLER

LAST spring the American press suddenly became very much alarmed about Mexico. It was run by a lot of Communists, it was overrun by Nazi agents, and it was headed straight for a revolution. In fact, many Mexicans grew alarmed themselves. Nor were they reassured when prominent Americans suggested that we take over the country, to protect their democratic interests and our own; they could not see the difference between this proposal and what Germany had done to Denmark, or Russia to Finland. But most of the natives, blessed by illiteracy and a simple temperament, shrugged off all this talk of a revolution. Many had not even heard of it. I remember that when I brought up the subject, some were surprised and pleasurably excited, as by the news of a big fiesta or earthquake. About the war, however, I could not get them really interested. I would first have had to get over the idea of what and where Europe is.

It is of this unpolitical Mexico that Kim Schee writes, and writes very pleasantly. His "Cantina" is a collection of sketches or extended anecdotes about the simple natives, in love and in liquor. They are mostly in the *New Yorker* vein. There is the story, for instance, of Petra Ruiz: a woman so ill-favored in appearance and disposition that when she had a baby the pious but realistic townsfolk knew there could be only one explanation—it was an Immaculate Conception. There also enter some American visitors, notably the Tequila Twins: a pair of fat, middle-aged ladies with incurable troubles who set out to drink themselves to death but who, after a memorable six months, unfortunately effected a remarkable cure and returned to the States, again sober, fat, and middle-aged. (The typical tourist, incidentally, is apt to make the natives seem relatively complex, or even chaste.) Knowing the town of which Mr. Schee writes, I happen to know that his stories are in large part literally true. More important, they all could have happened, ought to have happened. And many of the illustrations, by Carl Critz, are also delightful.

J. B. Trend, however, does talk

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about Mexican politics—as well as botany, language, archaeology, books, and many other matters. He is a professor of Spanish at Cambridge University; his "Mexico, a New Spain with Old Friends" is an account of a sabbatical holiday. The book contains a curious mixture of elementary and specialized information; some chapters read like a simple tourist's diary, others are likely to interest only those who already know Mexico or have scholarly interests. Although it has little obvious charm, at least Mr. Trend is not resolved to be always charming; and although his observations are seldom original or penetrating, he is a good enough guide because he is always curious, sensible, honest, sympathetic. He is an unusually modest man of good will. His English readers can profit by the good will; their official and commercial representatives in Mexico have too seldom displayed any. American readers might profit specifically by his observations on the Cárdenas administration, and its hospitality to the Spanish refugees (the "old friends" of his title).

D. H. Lawrence remarked the "intense though often suppressed irritation," finally the "bitter hopelessness that comes over people who know Mexico well." These books give only an inkling of the good reasons for such irritation and hopelessness. But together they give a good idea of why the feeling need not be intense or bitter, and why Mexico remains so fascinating, and exciting a country.

Drawing by Carl Critz, from "Cantina."

All Gaul Is Divided

LETTERS FROM OCCUPIED FRANCE. With a foreword by Elizabeth Morrow. New York: Greystone Press. 1941. 94 *pp.* $1.

Reviewed by DOUGLAS SCHNEIDER

THAT the material of these letters came from the Occupied Zone cannot be doubted. Those who have lived there will recognize the misgivings of the peasant, off to "inscribe" his pig, the organized disorder of the Reichswehr passport bureau, the Feld-Polizei's "red phonograph discs at the end of short handles" for signalling to traffic.

The author's command of French is no less certain. Few American adapters could have invented the Gallic metaphor for the glass of wine given to the Garde Champêtre: "something to dampen his tonsils." French rhythm underlies many an apparently well balanced English sentence. The letters, though not dated, follow a chronological order, judging from allusions to the first invaders, Indian Summer, Christmas trees. This arrangement may justify the sub-title. But the reader will not be misled: if these are letters they are, very decidedly, to be considered among those written for publication. Like the marquise writing to her daughter, Madame de Grignan, the author of this collection realized that more than one reader would have access to this correspondence.

The reactions of the citizens are studied fairly, their hardships, material and moral, set forth with sympathy. Minor discrepancies between the writer's experience and what most of us saw (women and commercial travellers coming in only eighteen hours after the troops, for instance) do not alter the fact that these ninety-five pages give a clearer picture of life and thought in France than do many more ambitious books. Not the least touching note is the feeling, be it subtly or naïvely conveyed, that the author, while describing the utter bewilderment of the French, has not wholly succeeded in clearing his own mind from that bewilderment.

Those whose love for France has never weakened, for whom the Café du Dôme and the Bar du Ritz are not all Gaul should read this book. They will derive from it much knowledge if little joy, and bitter sweet memories. "The wind was etching curlicues upon the surface of the Seine and the bells of Sainte Clotilde were ringing for nine o'clock mass," says the author. And you may then, if you loved Paris, think of Verlaine and of the Chanson d'Automne:

.....quand
Sonne l'heure,
Je me souviens
Des jours anciens
Et je pleure.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

LITERATURE'S UNHAPPY LOVERS

The course of true love never did run smooth, and sometimes it has taken some terrific jolts. From the descriptions of their misfortunes given below can you recognize the unfortunate victims? Allow 5 points if you can give their names, and another 5 if you can also recall the story in which they appeared and its author. A score of 60 is par, 70 is good, and 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 20.

1. When her lover was murdered and buried in the forest, this heroine dug him up, planted his head in a pot basil, and watered it with her tears.
2. Separated when they were compelled to evacuate their home land, these betrothed lovers met many years later as he was dying of the plague.
3. This super-romantic but homely lover courted the woman he loved and won her—for another, a handsome but stupid soldier.
4. Frightened away from their trysting place by a lion, she fled, leaving a blood-smeared veil; her lover, finding it, stabbed himself.
5. Though her nocturnal lover warned her never to try to get a look at him, curiosity prevailed; she lit a lamp when he was asleep, spilled a drop of hot oil on him, and the honeymoon was over.
6. When she separated from her lover and hastened ahead to her home in a haunted forest in order to prepare for her wedding, she was captured and burned to death by superstitious South American savages.
7. The twentieth time that he proposed to her she accepted him, but his mother talked her out of it and they were separated for many years.
8. She was happy with the lover who had been cast ashore on the island where she lived, until her father returned and banished the boy friend.
9. The vast difference in their social rank prevented him from proposing to the farmer girl who gave him a cup of water one day.
10. This couple never got together, for she lived in a drop of water under a microscope, while he looked on from the other end of it.

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Faherty . . .

BIG OLD SUN. By Robert Faherty. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1941. 290 *pp.* $2.50.

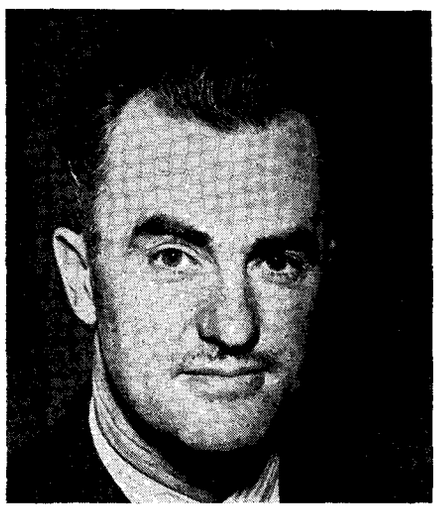
Reviewed by MARJORIE K. RAWLINGS

LONG after the events of this novel have left my mind—and they are already fading—I shall have the sense of its "big old sun," of its snakelike mangrove roots, its winds and rains and waters. Its physical atmosphere is so strongly and vitally created that it seemed to me I read the book not with my mind but with my body.

The characters are one with the setting, seeming to have been created out of its primitive elements, along with its alligators and crocodiles. They have the strange reality of a nightmare. The shrewd and lusty Mis' Penny, middle-aged and strong, the pretty bitch-in-heat Sylla, her Cracker-man Horace and her Sugar-boy conch, Mis' Penny's brother Luke, and the fish-man whose meddling is the weaving of the Fates, emerge to haunt one from the swamp mud and the salt tides.

The story is as harsh as the midsummer Florida sun. It is raw with hate and lust and greed and killing. Yet it has the naturalness and inevitability of a tropical storm, and when it is over, the reader has the same feeling of the passing by of a dark violence.

When a reviewer's personal prejudices are involved, it is difficult to estimate the appeal of a book for others. This reviewer is so enamored of the Florida Keys that it is impossible to know whether the impact of "Big Old Sun" stems from a personal delight or from the author's artistry. I believe it is a safe guess that any reader who can be charmed by color, by a restrained style, by the eddyings of stark human nature against the elements, will find here a definite enchantment.



Robert Faherty

Rayford . . .

COTTONMOUTH. By Julian Lee Rayford. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1941. 400 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by EUGENE ARMFIELD

BEFORE he turned to writing novels, Julian Lee Rayford was a poet, a painter, and a sculptor. He is also a native of Mobile, Alabama. Those facts, seemingly irrelevant to one another, are important in considering his first novel. For while the ostensible subject matter of "Cottonmouth" is the usual material of first novels—Myself When Young—the real hero of the book is the city in which the protagonist grew up, Mobile.

As an integrated novel "Cottonmouth" is no great shakes. It is a loosely fashioned autobiography, a series of episodes and anecdotes strung out at random, and jumping back and forth in time according to the whim of the author's memory. It adds nothing in particular to the long gallery of childhood portraits. Many authors, including Thomas Wolfe and Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings whose hands at times rest on this novel, have written better about boys. In Mr. Rayford's praise it should be said that his Paul, his family of seven brothers, his mother, Nanny the cook, his friends and neighbors are attractive, likable people. And the young hero is presented as a refreshingly average boy. There is no intense preoccupation with the problems of adolescent sex, no incredibly sensitive soul-stirrings. These things are good, but if "Cottonmouth" were no more than that it would be just another novel about another American kid growing up in another typically American family.

But, happily, Mr. Rayford loves the town from which he came and he draws it with an artist's sense of form and color. Young Paul Brewster grows up amidst the sights, the sounds, the smells of a Southern city, a town at once indolent and vigorous, hot and beautiful and ugly. History, legends, vivid brief sketches of people, buildings, ships, and places Mr. Rayford uses to make his background real. The lyricism (at times overly thick), the descriptive force, the ability to draw, that another might have employed in a mistaken attempt to depict the ineffable yearnings of a budding young artist, Mr. Rayford has expended on Mobile. It is well that he did so. Almost any author of talent can write fairly convincingly of his own early youth. Not every writer can make a city full of people come alive.

Eugene Armfield is the author of "Where the Weak Grow Strong."

Thorndike . . .

NOT TO THE STRONG. By J. P. Thorndike. New York: The Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1941. 346 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by STUART CLOETE

THIS is a romantic novel set in East Africa. The author knows Africa and writes of it with some beauty and understanding. There are good passages. There is an excellent one in which a small body of men, as they march through the bush, are followed by a lion. Each night it walks round them as they sleep and finally it takes one of them.

But the story itself is conventional. Boy not only meets girl and gets girl but does so in the most approved fashion. Boy is no good, a handsome dashing rapscallion. He has failed. He is dying in the forest and is found by girl, the incredibly innocent daughter of that idealized type of Englishman, now almost extinct, who dresses for dinner in the middle of any jungle, desert, or swamp in which he finds himself. Boy follows pattern, recovers, and falls passionately in love with the daughter of the psychopathic Englishman. His feelings are reciprocated. Naturally, being a gentleman and conscious of his failure he gives her up. He goes through adventures. All this happens during the last war and girl is captured by the Germans in order, inevitably, to be rescued by boy. They live happily ever after.

Yet despite the convention, and the banality of theme and treatment, the book has quality and pace. The defects of technique are counterbalanced by a quality of genuineness and feeling. "Not to the Strong" is eminently readable and gives one the feeling that it is the first novel of someone who will mature and do work.

James Montgomery Flagg

Julian Lee Rayford

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Hawkins . . .

LIGHTER THAN DAY. By Desmond Hawkins. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1941. 305 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BESS JONES

BECAUSE it is not safe to attribute to an author implications he may never have intended, it is prudent to say of Mr. Hawkins's second novel that it offers the reader two choices. It may be read and, with reservations, enjoyed simply as the tale of two brothers who grew up in a small English town after the First World War and who face, in the different ways their unlike temperaments dictate, the uncertainties that led to the Second. Nick, already on his own economically, understands how to blend his pleasures and his responsibilities, and especially how to balance the claims of his somewhat possessive parents with his firm intention to take his fun where he finds it. The measure of his success is his elders' acceptance of his maturity, for they rightly believe that any real test will prove his essential soundness and capacity for action.

Clive, the younger, plays a mild sort of Hamlet to his brother's Horatio. Still unfree of his mother and his home, restless, darkly aware of great events impending, he stops one nostril against the smell of Denmark while with the other he sniffs almost eagerly for the first fumes of the distant flames he hopes may "consume the tinder of dead years and make a clearing for the future." But his intellectual awareness has far outstripped his still adolescent emotions, and when he is confronted with the intricacies of love for a beautiful, elusive girl, he lacks the suitable strategy.

Your other choice is to look upon the novel as a fable of England between two wars, an England which, Clive complains, has made a "life so petty, so passionless, so smooth, so complacent, in a world so restless, so bitter, so tormented," no sensitive person can truly believe in it because he cannot think he will find it unchanged when he wakes up in the morning. Some awful transformation must convulse it, some dreadful agony must sweep over it to make it "clean and wholesome and fertile again." The instrument for this cleansing Clive sees always in the imagery of fire and burning. (The actual plot reaches its climax with the burning of the family home.) If you accept this emphasis, you will find the heart of the argument in Chapter VIII, an eloquent, prophetic, and (oddly enough) comforting exposition.

The very need for decision, however, shows Mr. Hawkins's weakness as a novelist. There are story tellers and there are writers. When they combine in one person, you have a great book. Sometimes the story teller can make you forget that he is not too expert at English prose. On the other hand, a writer may know all about the parts of speech and how to combine them into the subtlest sounds and meanings, yet still leave you cool because he lacks sweep, inevitability, and a compelling demand for attention. Mr. Hawkins, unfortunately, still belongs to this last class. His creatures are mouthpieces, not living individuals. Their talk is too literary, too analytical. Actions seldom speak louder than words, and nothing is simply motivated or simply treated except by the dull. Their glibness in the language of the new psychology has reduced it from allusiveness to habit. The result is that you delight in Mr. Hawkins as a stylist, you relish his witty metaphor, his sharp sense of the contribution each word makes to meaning, you enjoy the vigorous denunciations through Clive and Jackie, but you scarcely read him for his story and you can believe in almost none of his characters.

"If Desmond Hawkins ever has a story worth his style . . . we shall have an unbeatable book."

If Mr. Hawkins ever has a story worth his style or characters as vitally presented as his own thoughts, we shall have an unbeatable book. Even this one ought not be overlooked by anyone who is interested in good prose and in shrewd comment on England.

Bess Jones [Mrs. Howard Mumford Jones] is the co-author of "The Life of Whistler's Mother."

Tillier . . .

MY UNCLE BENJAMIN. By Claude Tillier. Translated by Marie Lorenz. New York: Coventry House. 1941. 303 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JUSTIN O'BRIEN

WHY should any American publisher bring out now a novel which, though first issued in France ninety-nine years ago, has never enjoyed a very wide public even in its own country? To begin with—aside from the question of copyright—he was grossly misled, for someone persuaded him that Benjamin was "France's most popular fictional hero after Gargantua." Secondly, he has been informed that the German occupation authorities have banned the book in their part of France. But if this is so, the censor's decision can be explained less by any French enthusiasm for Tillier than by the fact that most pre-Nazi Germans were brought up on Ludwig Pfau's sweetened translation of him. And today they distrust what they once admired. Finally, the publisher discovered that earlier American editions had been cut and this permitted him to advertise his as "unexpurgated." Actually he has merely re-integrated the two chapters which coarsely translate a couple of nose-thumbings into action. If you think this makes any difference, read chapters VIII and X first.

Written by an obscure pamphleteer and first published in a local newspaper in 1842, "Mon Oncle Benjamin" sandwiches a gay story between a pessimistic introduction and a mock-heroic conclusion that would be depressing if the characters were interesting enough. The thin thread of story, relating Benjamin's hesitations about marriage, recalls Panurge in a similar predicament in Rabelais's third book. The hero himself, with his happy-go-lucky swashbuckling and wordy epicurean philosophy, belongs to another French tradition, for he is closer to Cyrano. Yet his creator lacks both Rabelais's humor, at once popular and intellectual, and Rostand's sentiment. These deficiencies alone, however, would not be enough to prevent Benjamin from becoming a literary type and eponym.

Even when he first appeared, he came too late. The attacks on superstition, injustice, class distinctions, and various human foibles which Tillier puts into his uncle's mouth were already indissolubly associated with greater figures.

The careless translation and smudgy illustrations add nothing to the French original.

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Biography-Bibliography

CARL PURINGTON ROLLINS

"IT should be a golden rule with all historic publishing houses to preserve their annals and in due course to give them to the world." It would be well if historic printing houses would honor the same rule, but few of them have done so. Other hands have, at later date, written of the Aldine, the Plantin, the Baskerville presses; while the Oxford University, the Merrymount, and the Ashendene establishments have received attention from their founders or managers. The beautiful "Bibliography of the Books Printed at the Ashendene Press," issued in 1935, was at once recognized as a worthy and noble record, and one without parallel.

It is with this book that the new "Bibliography of the Grabhorn Press"* will stand. It, too, is a notable achievement and a magnificent record. The Ashendene Press was the last example of the "private" press on the model of the Kelmscott Press, while the Grabhorn Press is a current American house consistently doing the finest printing for the general market. Conditions surrounding the two ventures were not similar, but in both good craftsmanship has been respected in both theory and practice.

What is now the Grabhorn Press was first established by Edwin Grabhorn in Indianapolis in 1915, as the Studio Press. The early work gives, as is natural, but a suggestion of the later. A certain exuberance in the announcements of the first few years was in a style common to young and enthusiastic printers, few of whom ever succeeded in accomplishing their ambitious programs as the years rolled around. It was not until the removal of the Press (now augmented by Robert Grabhorn) to San Francisco in 1919 that the skill and determination of its founders found public sympathy and support in sufficient volume to give them full scope.

This book is an intimate record of the twenty-one years since then. A pleasant and reminiscent introduction by Mr. Goudy is followed by the list of books and major items of job printing, and there are indexes of authors, titles, and type faces. The list of printings and publications (for the Press has both printed for others and for itself) is arranged chronologically and set off into sections. Each of these sections corresponds to the location of the premises of the Press in the various periods of occupancy. Each section is preceded by a brief historical resumé. Three hundred and thirty-eight items of greater importance are listed, with the lesser job printing listed under "Miscellaneous" in each section. The bibliographical descriptions are sufficiently complete, and are supplemented by annotations which help to place the particular item in an understandable setting.

The reader who wants to get the full flavor of the Grabhorn Press, however, should read Mr. Gregg Anderson's entertaining "Recollections of the Grabhorn Press," privately printed by him in 1935. Like all good printers, the Grabhorns are individualists, and good "copy." In the "Bibliography" this individuality extends even to the indexes, which are more elegant than useful. One can never be sure whether the item sought is listed under its title, its author, or its illustrator, while some, I suspect, can only be found in the list of type faces!

AN important feature of the volume is the inclusion of examples of the work of the Press, in the type and on the paper of the originals. Textual descriptions are always helped by illustration, and there are enough of them to give a fair idea of the kind of printing which the Grabhorn brothers have done. And how fine these examples are!

The Press has had no set "style" of work, but its printing exemplifies at its best that untramelled approach to book design characteristic of California printers. Grabhorn printing has been sound craftsmanship: on a knowledge and understanding of the best work of the past, unhampered by academic considerations of type and paper, its freedom and imagination have been justified by the results. The "Leaves of Grass," printed in 1930 for Random House (a spectacular book of large size, bound in leather and mahogany, issued at one hundred dollars a copy) was up to that time the most important undertaking of the Press, and is today perhaps its finest achievement. The "Cabeca da Vaca" of 1929 will bear comparison with the best of modern printing. The title-page of "The Spanish Occupation of California" of 1934, with its superb modernization of a fifteenth century Spanish page, is to my way of thinking the handsomest title-page in any modern book. Of another fine book of local historical importance, "Regulations for Governing the Province of the Californias," "Edwin Grabhorn has been heard to remark that he printed this book in lieu of another edition of Gray's Elegy." Just what he has printed in place of the "Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam" is not clear.

Colophon of the Colt Press (William Roth and Jane Grabhorn).

The format of this "Bibliography" challenges attention. It is an ample folio, measuring ten by fourteen inches, the binding being in cloth sides and leather back, with title stamped in blind, and, unhappily, false bands. The paper is a heavy, fine hand made from the Canson & Montgulfier mills in France. The type face is "Franciscan," cut especially for the Press's use by F. W. Goudy, and first used in the "Coronado" volume of 1933. It is a hybrid face, part roman and with rustic capitals, a type of many peculiarities but with much distinction and individuality. Initials and some type lines are in red, as well as two pages of press marks. The presswork, although somewhat uneven, has the deep and solid impression characteristic of good printing on hand made paper—a virtue unknown of the modern pressman and his too-smooth paper.

The volume will probably annoy the "scientific" school of bibliographers as being too large, too ornate, too elaborate, as tending to obscure the wood with the trees. But such criticism is quite beside the point. It will not be used as an everyday hand book, but when it is consulted it will yield not only the desired information, but an added esthetic charm. It is more than a mere check list, it is a monument and a testimony to the architectural quality of good printing. Even more it is a requital by two of our foremost printers of the obligation imposed on them to justify their craftsmanship. It will take its place with the half dozen notable books printed in America in the past half century.

*BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE GRABHORN PRESS, 1915-1940. By Elinor Raas Heller and David Magee. San Francisco: The Grabhorn Press. 1940. 210 copies. $35.

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English Cavalcade

PAGEANT OF ENGLAND, 1840-1940. By Arthur Bryant. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1941. 338 *pp., with an index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

J. R. SEELEY, who once made the remark that history is "past politics," would hardly recognize Mr. Bryant's "Pageant of England" as history. Palmerston, Gladstone, Disraeli—much Disraeli—do indeed come into it, as do the repeal of the Corn Laws, the Reform of 1867, the Parliament Act of 1911, and many other political measures. But there is nothing like a connected political narrative, indeed hardly any kind of narrative. The book is a series of scenes from English life, a sort of *Cavalcade* built up from odds and ends of social and economic history. It does not altogether avoid the major difficulty of such history: it seems at times episodic and disjointed. But on the whole Mr. Bryant makes the thing move, succeeds in living up to the title of his book.

He succeeds partly because the separate pictures he draws—London in the 1840's, the last of Cobbett's rural England, the "dark satanic mills" of the North and Midlands, the more-than-England of Kipling and Cecil Rhodes, the battles in the mud of Flanders—are filled with movement, with concrete, picturesque, and sometimes most unpleasant details. Mr. Bryant, like Gillray, Cobbett, and Dickens, loves the folksy, down-to-earth, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding side of English life. Perhaps for this reason he is at his best in the earlier part of his century when this side was somewhat more evident.

Mr. Bryant gets a total impression, indeed a message, out of this colorful array of materials for social history by a more obvious and more artificial device than the skillful choice and arrangement of details. He has a thesis, to which he comes back again and again. It is something like this: The man who controlled the destinies of England at the beginning of the nineteenth century deliberately broke with the English tradition of a corporative, moral, and purposive society held together by mutual inter-dependence from Crown and gentry to the humblest laborer, and sought first and last only to make money by making manufactured goods. Utilitarian philosophy, laissez-faire, free trade, the cash nexus all made for a rich but unhappy England, an England divided, as Disraeli so clearly saw, into two nations, the rich and the poor. Although from 1867 English good sense gradually worked

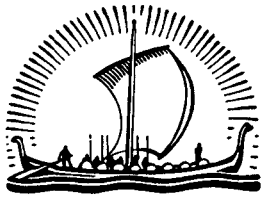
ELIZABETH MADOX ROBERTS

1886-1941

The tragic news of the death of one of the foremost American writers came as her latest volume was about to be published. Her career began in 1922 with a volume of poetry, and reached its first peak in 1926 with *The Time of Man,* a novel which many of her admirers still rank as their favorite. At substantial intervals, such major novels as *My Heart and My Flesh, The Great Meadow, Black Is My Truelove's Hair,* and several volumes of shorter fiction and poetry increased her standing among our front-rank talents.

The work whose publication comes within four days of her death is, in a sense, representative of her career as a whole: it comprises a very few and very distinguished stories, created over a period of many years. The combination of perfection and careful selection which it embodies makes it a fitting monument to a writer who achieved beauty, significance, and great stature by unhurried, self-disciplined creation.

NOT BY STRANGE GODS



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back into a more collectivist society, although by 1914 the working classes had emerged in part from the awful degradation of the 1840's, nonetheless England as a society had been geared to such industrial specialization that the rise of competitors like Germany and the United States was driving her to the wall. In effect, her misguided rulers after 1918 attempted to throttle one of those competitors, Germany, and rebuild a nineteenth-century world-market. This proved impossible. Mr. Bryant is not altogether clear as to the part of wisdom today. Germany must be beaten. After that, apparently, he would seek a solution in a better balance at home, a Europe organized on sensible economic lines, and an Empire which would be in part economically self-sufficient.

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By

DAVID LOTH

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American Tapestry

THE UNITED STATES. By John D. Hicks. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1937; 1941. 2 *vol.* 1467 *pp., with index.* $7.50.

Reviewed by JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS

THE first of these volumes, by Professor Hicks of the University of Wisconsin, with the sub-title of "The Federal Union," carried the history of the United States down to 1865, and was published four years ago. The second volume, "The American Nation," just completed, brings the story to the election of last November and the two are now published together in attractive form. The first volume being already well-known and having been reviewed on its first appearance, interest naturally centers in the second.

The author's guiding ideas, namely, that "all history is interrelated and that chronology is of profound importance," are apparent in his new work as in his former, and the style and method of treatment are about the same. The book is based on the courses which Professor Hicks gave for eighteen years although it may not be designed as one of those textbooks, which he humorously says he has forced his students to buy and which "he himself out of a distressing sense of duty felt obliged occasionally to read." Never having been a teacher I do not know how well the work may be adapted for that purpose, even if so intended, but it is a well-rounded history of our country for any reader and is particularly valuable in coming down to within a few weeks almost of the present moment.

Obviously any historian is heavily handicapped in writing of contemporaneous and highly controversial affairs. Much data which may be easily accessible to a historian of a generation hence is lacking, and prejudice and passion too easily muddy the ink well, but Professor Hicks has succeeded admirably in his difficult task. Of the second volume between a third and a half—271 pages to be exact—is devoted to the period from Wilson's trying to keep out of the last war to our participation in the present one, to such extent as we are already in it. The period is one of the most crucial in all our history, and this is the best moderately brief factual account of it which I have seen. Professor Hicks is singularly free from bias, or at least has been able to keep it out of his text. After having lived through all the dust and heat of the conflict one has an odd feeling in reading so coldly dispassionate an account of it all. This is all to the good, particularly in a textbook, even though occasionally one may wish that the author might get just a little "het up" and give us his own judgment on events, especially as he is capable of independence of judgment.

The work includes the usual topics of what used to be called the "new history," that is, social life, literature, economics, labor, business, and all the rest. Anyone who has tried to weave all these into one coherent whole realizes the difficulties and how easy it is to suggest, with a knowing air, that the proportions are wrong or that the treatment of this or that is too brief to be of real value, just as sections on literature, for example, almost inevitably tend to become mere lists of authors and titles. On the whole, however, these volumes give as good a bird's eye picture of our past as conditions allow, and should prove a good text for students or an up-to-date reference book for the smaller private library.

It is not customary in reviews to speak of the publishers' part in a work but in this case they should be congratulated on the excellence of the binding.

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Sweepstakes

BY EMILY GREENAWAY

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EIGHT NOVELISTS BETWEEN WARS

(*Continued from page 4*)

under which their lives are led. The social and economic conditions, the spiritual atmosphere they breathe, the set of values prevailing in their milieu are such that no very admirable or satisfactory behavior is conceivable save in exceptional cases, and the actual exceptions are extremely rare so far as these men report. In general we may say that their conscious or unconscious assumptions are materialistic in the Marxian sense. That is, it is tacitly assumed that men's states of mind are in the last analysis determined largely by the material conditions under which they live, and that these material conditions are largely determined by economic factors, industrial factors.

These men are not dogmatic theorists—their books are not logical demonstrations of the effect of material conditions on character. The case would be simpler if this were so, and the ordinary reader might be made less uneasy by their record. They are, it happens, well aware of native propensities in human nature which tend to shabby or distressing behavior. Several of them, for example (notably Faulkner, Caldwell, Farrell, and Steinbeck), are impressed with congenital low mentality as a factor to be reckoned with in any view of the social scene. And while in Caldwell this low mentality would seem to derive from slavish and indigent conditions extending over several generations, the reader sometimes wonders whether the causal sequence may not work the other way—whether low mentality may not in many cases be the cause rather than the effect of slavish indigence. In that view of the case—and leaving eugenics out of account—one may arrive at the very discouraging view that slavish indigence is a condition resulting inevitably from the low mentality which is a recurring feature of human nature, and that the mean and revolting way of life that goes with low mentality is consequently an ineradicable feature of human society.

Another cause of uneasiness and dubiety in the reader of these American realists is that, with one exception (Wolfe), they are highly disinclined to discuss things with the reader, to come into the open, like Thackeray or George Eliot, and interpret the story for the reader's benefit—to point the moral for him, and explain the underlying philosophy, either in the reader's terms or in their own. In this respect these writers are conforming to the prevailing literary style. Since the middle of the nineteenth century there has been a growing tendency to leave the author out of his narrative, and many considerations have united to confirm writers of fiction in the feeling that it is bad form for them to intrude personally in their story.

Moreover, it is considered that the *story* is better when it is self-contained. The aim is to "dramatize" the story—free it so far as possible from theoretical generalizations, from painstaking explanations—leave it to work itself out in terms of concrete action, like a stage play. Thus we shall live through the story directly and intimately, and not at one remove as is the case where an author stands there with his pointer and directs us what to see and think.

Generally speaking a work of fiction requires no gloss, for the simple reason that the implicit assumptions of the writer and of the reader are virtually identical. They represent the same culture complex, the same scale of values, the same judgments of behavior. But this is not the case with many of these American writers and the average "bourgeois" reader. There is implied in many of these novels a scale of values appreciably different from that held by the average reader into whose hands they will come. And very seldom is there more than a covert hint as to what precisely is the scale of values implied in the story. But more than this—it is not so much the author's scale of values that disturbs the reader as his wish to insinuate doubts as to any scale of values presumably held by the reader. The author wishes to suggest that every instance of human behavior is in need of analysis in terms of causes and effects not always clearly apparent—in terms, particularly, of remote causes and effects in the economic world. He wishes to bring in question the whole set of *mores* perhaps unconsciously held by his reader; and since he is prevented by his self-denying ordinance from stating his doubts directly in abstract terms, all that he can do is to present case after case of behavior, whether conforming to the conventional standard, or conditioned by a social set-up molded by it,

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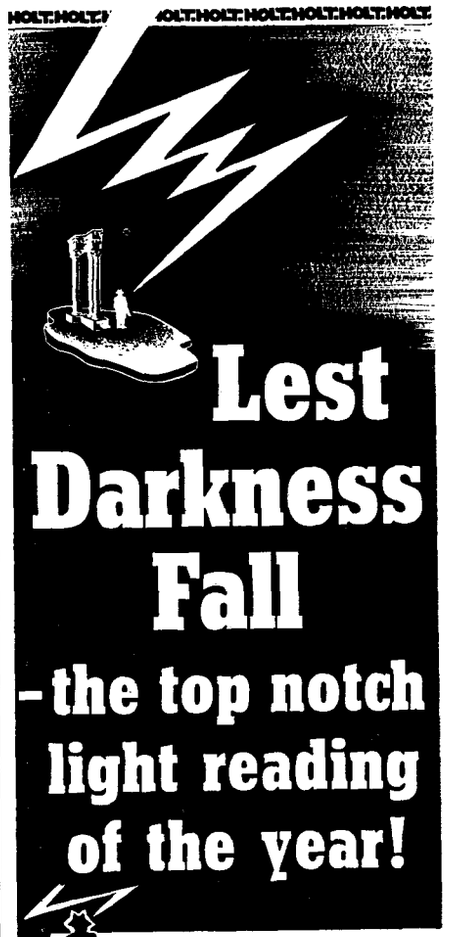

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- "Martin's adventures with the intrigue of the times, the conditions of the times, and the women, are delightful . . . Told with rare good nature." —*N. Y. Sun*
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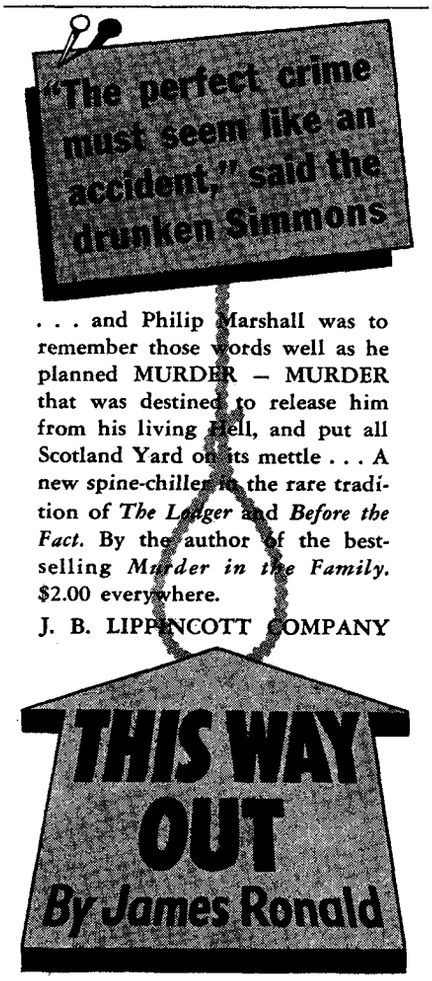
or violating the conventional standard as a result of forces not adequately provided for within the prevailing code. He cannot label his cases and show what light is thrown on the prevailing code by the separate instance or the whole exhibit. All he can do is to make his cases as significant as possible and arrange them in such a pattern as to throw what light they can on one another, and then leave it to the reader to draw his own conclusions. And often enough the unwary reader may draw conclusions somewhat different from those intended, and particularly the conclusion that his author has a much too cynical view of human nature.

ONE test of excellence in fiction is the creation of characters that live in the imagination and stay with the reader as permanent acquaintances. In this matter these writers are somewhat at a disadvantage in comparison with those more romantic or more simply theatrical in their characterization. For the heart is a powerful builder of character, and the imagination will often content itself with mere figments of the stage. These contemporary realists will seldom give the heart free reign; and they generally are less concerned with stage effect than with the sober lineaments of truth. But truth itself has carrying power when deeply and intensely conceived. Characters come to life by mere force of being convincing. Besides, these writers are not without their ways of setting the stage and highlighting the actors. And if there are few in their cast of characters who are positively lovable, few who put upon us the spell of a Becky Sharp, a Parson Adams, a Wilkins Micawber, or a Tess Durbeyfield, there is still a considerable number who fascinate us, convince and hold us, and who in retrospect are felt to be memorable and significant, and so far as mortal creations can be so, unforgettable.

Thus we have, in Dos Passos, Eleanor Stoddard, interior decorator, and J. Ward Moorehouse, public relations counsellor ("U.S.A."); in Hemingway, Lady Brett Ashley, the glamorous "bitch," the Greek-American "count" ("The Sun Also Rises"), and the Spanish virago and patriot Pilar ("For Whom the Bell Tolls"). In Faulkner, who is more theatrical, we have a much larger number: in "The Sound and the Fury," the idiot Benjy Compson, his mean brother Jason and his niece Quentin; in "As I Lay Dying," Addie Bundren, the dead mother, to name only the most arresting of many characters; in "Sanctuary," Popeye and Temple, the frantic coed; in "Light in August," Joe Christmas, the white negro, and the Rev. Gail Hightower; in "Absalom, Absalom!" the portentous legendary figure of Colonel Thomas Sutpen, and the New Orleans half-caste gentleman, Charles Bon. This is the shortest list one could make for Faulkner. In Caldwell, we have the immortal Lester Jeeter, and Ellie May of the hare-lip, and the preacher woman Bessie ("Tobacco Road"); Semon Dye, the preacher man ("Journeyman"); Sheriff Jeff McCurtain ("Trouble in August"); Ty Ty and Darling Jill and Will Thompson the weaver ("God's Little Acre"); not to name any characters from the short stories. In Thomas Wolfe, there are Oliver and Eliza Gant ("Look Homeward, Angel"); Uncle Bascom and Francis Starwick ("Of Time and the River"); "Major" Lafayette Joyner and Esther Jack ("The Web and the Rock"). In Farrell, there are Studs Lonigan (in the trilogy named for him); Ambrose J. McGinty ("Gas-House McGinty"); Jim O'Neill the expressman, the grandmother Mary O'Flaherty, and Aunt Margaret ("A World I Never Made," "No Star Is Lost" and "Father & Son"). In Marquand, we have George Apley, the Boston brahmin ("The Late George Apley"); Aunt Clothilde and Allen Southby, the Harvard housemaster ("Wickford Point"), as well as Mr. Moto, if we go outside of serious fiction into the region of the artistic-commercial. And finally, we have in Steinbeck, Danny and the Pirate (in "Tortilla Flat"), poor Lennie ("Of Mice and



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Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE *Freeman Wills Crofts* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Ambitious English nostrum-maker drinks aconitinized tea. Insp. French and his murder bag follow far flung trail to surprising finish.	Events—interesting enough—leading up to crime consume almost half of book. French does his stuff methodically, but ending is fortuitous.	Grade-B French
REHEARSALS FOR MURDER *E. Ferrars* (Crime Club: $2.)	Poison in cold medicine kills hapless English girl. Her reputed lover later slain. Journalist and Man Friday trap killer.	Giddy and amoral lot of British artists etc. give Toby Dyke & Co. some tough moments in bizarre and befuddled yarn.	Exotic
THE DEAD TAKE NO BOWS *Richard Burke* (Houghton Mifflin: $2.)	Aging musical-show producer, his former leading lady, and housemaid killed in garish N. Y. apt. Cocky Quinny Hite takes over.	Genial toughness and Moon-Mullinsesque antics of Hite enliven otherwise run-of-mill tale that has its thrilling moments.	Agreeable
HEARSES DON'T HURRY *Stephen Ransome* (Crime Club: $2.)	State's Attorney Chance smashes crooked political ring, solves two murders, and barely escapes with own skin.	Efforts of lawbreakers to defeat prosecutor's campaign lead up to amazing climax—which is almost too sudden.	Good enough

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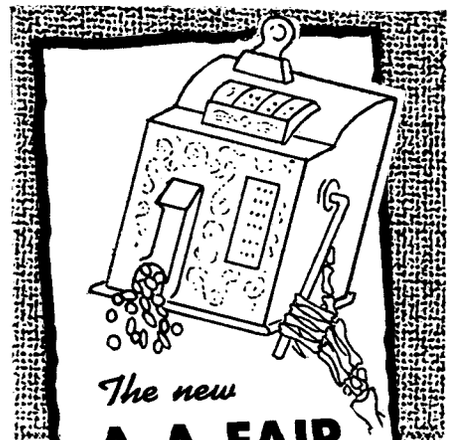
Men"), and in "The Grapes of Wrath," at least Grampa and Ma and the preacher Casy.

The devotees of any of these men will quarrel with me over my omissions, but never, I feel confident, over my inclusions, and not seriously over the proportion of memorable characters assigned to each author. I have played my little game without fear or favor. I have got as far as I could from the books and ruled out severely all ulterior motives of criticism and judgment. I have simply sent out a general invitation and held open house for these fictive people as they exist in my imagination; and I have favored those who came first and stayed longest—who cried out most insistently for recognition.

But I have no inclination to play favorites. What I wish, is to assure the reader unacquainted with these interbellum writers that their pages are swarming with people of the greatest fascination and colorfulness. In no case has the author's seriousness about human nature kept him from meeting his prime obligation as a storyteller, to introduce his reader to interesting and memorable specimens of the genus homo.



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150 Years of War

THE ARMED HORDE: 1793-1939. By Hoffman Nickerson. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1940. 427 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by R. ERNEST DUPUY

AS usual, Mr. Nickerson wields a virile pen. No mean historian, he has compiled a valuable compendium of a century and a half of war, entertainingly told. The work is a critical analysis of the mass army, raised by universal conscription, under the theory of the "nation in arms." Conscription and democracy—the latter tyrannously applied—are the author's *bêtes noires,* tracing as he does the adoption of universal service from August 23, 1793 by the French National Convention, down to the present day. To the doctrines of Jean Jacques Rousseau he attributes its rise, to the results of 1914-18 its collapse.

The author is absolutely correct in his contention that the armed horde is doomed. That, however, is no new contention; professional soldiers have been harping on that string ever since warfare became three-dimensional.

But—today conservative estimates of the combined land armies of Great Britain, Germany, and Italy add up to more than ten million men. Soviet Russia is credited with five and a half million more, actually mobilized. Adding the smaller change of what is left of the French armies in North Africa and Syria, plus the troops of the Balkan countries, we arrive at sizeable figures. On this side of the water, Uncle Sam seeks an army of more than one million, attained by selective service. In Asia, Japanese troops under arms number a million and a quarter; China's armed strength can only be conjectured. In the face of these facts Mr. Nickerson tells us that the mass army is on the way out, that the curve of war is descending. One wonders.

In war, just as in the prize-ring, the good big man is better than the good little man; but he must be *good.* Today's warfare is not between nations "in arms," but between nations "at war." It is total war. The nation unwilling or unable to gear every citizen into its effort—man, woman, and child in disciplined coördination, will fall. No mincing eighteenth century tactics can stand today against the hammer-blow of all-out effort.

The great value of this book lies in the author's grasp of history; its principal lesson—reiterated in well-told historical examples—is that the "valor of ignorance" can never replace disciplined effort coördinated by dispassionate competent military leadership.

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Biography

CHARLES EGBERT CRADDOCK (MARY NOAILLES MURFREE). By Edd Winfield Parks. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1941. 258 *pp.* $2.50.

Minor writers are doubtless entitled to their biographies, but it is questionable whether Mr. Parks's book about the author of "In the Tennessee Mountains" is a necessary work. The study has all the air of a doctoral dissertation. It fails to evoke anything except a stereotype-aspiring Southern girl, witnessing the waste of the Civil War, who turns to writing about "our own people" and temporarily makes good. Mr. Parks's stylistic infelicities are great, there being times when both syntax and metaphor seem to escape from his control. Why does a publisher permit sentences like these to appear? "By 1870 cotton, corn, and livestock sold at ever lower prices, till bottom seemed reached only to have prices catapult lower still." For complete confusion of figure, this is almost incomparable. Or try this one: "One who, like Mary, observes social life from the sidelines, with observation sharpened by the fact that in a better world one would be more than a passive spectator, gains a keen insight into all the little tricks and byplay which young belles employ triumphantly." Or this one: "Just after the war, Tennessee had declared a legal interregnum, by which no refugee or political exile should suffer." This is not good writing. H. M. J.

Fiction

WHAT MAKES SAMMY RUN? By Budd Schulberg. Random House. 1941. 303 *pp.* $2.50.

This Hollywood novel is straight from the "tough" school of "I Can Get It for You Wholesale" and "Pal Joey." It is not quite as remorseless as the first title and it does not have O'Hara's humor but it has qualities of its own sufficient to make one cry frantically for the Flit, long before the skillful climax comes off.

The story is the familiar one of a newspaper office boy, a Rivington Street Jew, with an utterly conscienceless urge for power and position. By stealing, cheating, cadging, and bullying he becomes a motion picture producer. He does not even bother to kill his victims, let alone bury them, as he makes his way in the world. His emotional life is purely physical and functional till he has reached the top of the heap. From this elevated position he cries for the moon and gets it—a red-haired girl with social position, the very symbol of what had made Sammy run, the final gratification of his merciless egotism, even to the detail of red hair.

The girl is untrue to him before the guests have finished with the wedding dinner and Sammy is left with the bitter reflection that his hired women had, at least, the utilitarian morality, of *quid pro quo*. His aristocratic wife is merely wanton. P. S.

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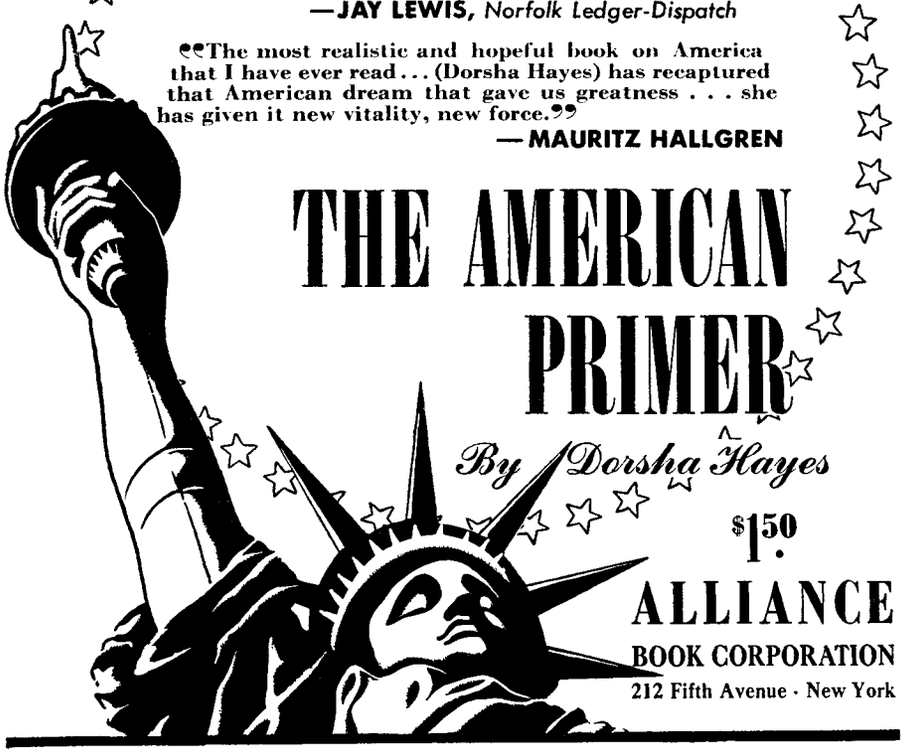

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7. Trilby O'Ferrall and William "Little Billee" Bagot in "Trilby," by George Du Maurier.
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TRADE WINDS

P. E. G. QUERCUS ASSOCIATES

FARRAR & RINEHART and *Red Book Magazine* have chosen Ciro Alegria as the winner of the $2,500 award in the Latin America Prize Contest. The contest was judged by an international jury consisting of Ernesto Montenegro, Blair Niles, and John Dos Passos. It is interesting to note that every Latin American country, with the exception of Uruguay, took part in the contest, totaling more than one hundred novels. The title of Ciro Alegria's winning novel is "El Mundo es Ancho y Ajeno" *(Broad and Alien is the World)*. The award will be presented by Archibald MacLeish at a dinner on Pan-American day, April 14, given in the winner's honor.

★ ★

☞It seems to us that one of the really great publishing achievements in many years is *The Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*. This monumental work, in preparation for more than ten years, is the first attempt since 1824 to bring the whole of English literature within the bounds of a single work of reference. Edited by F. W. Bateson in four volumes, it covers every written work, from the earliest beginnings until 1900, that can be included under the heading of English literature. The price is $32.50 and worth every penny of it.

★ ★

☞There is no connection, of course, but it was nice to see the new Warner movie, *The Sea Wolf*, and then sit down with *Spoilers of The Sea*, by John Philips Cranwell. Jack London's famous saga has at last been done with justice and authenticity and conveys all the thrills of a first reading. And so does the Cranwell book. To be sure, it is not fiction, but the book recounts one of the few phases of modern war in which the individual enterprise is still paramount—the exploits of surface sea raiding on enemy shipping from the time of the Confederate raiders of the Civil War to the Germans cruising the oceans today. There are stories of the *Emden*, *Karlsruhe*, *Wolf*, and *Seeadler* of the First World War, and of the *Graf von Spee* and *Lutzow* of the present war. *Spoilers of the Sea* ought to help interested naval amateurs acquire a clearer understanding about sea warfare.

★ ★

☞One of our strong favorites of the baseball diamond is Al Schacht, funnyman, clown, superb pantomimist, and jester supreme. Al has just authored *Clowning Through Baseball*, and for the one dollar A. S. Barnes & Co. is asking, it is value indeed. Schacht for many years was a teammate of the great Walter Johnson. Associated with the game for almost thirty-five years, Al relates with obvious pleasure the superstitions and foibles of players, and the amusing experiences of the new crop of players that hit the training camps in the Spring. ☞Colton Storm, bookseller, has written a story, *And The Not-Known End*, to be published by another bookseller, Mitchell Kennerley, of the Sixty-Fifth Street Bookshop. Mr. Storm has taken his title from the prologue of Archibald MacLeish's narrative poem *Conquistador*. Richard Ellis has designed the format. It is printed by the Haddon Craftsmen in an edition of 500 copies.

★ ★

☞And from the same press, which is W. W. Norton, Carl D. Lane's *Boatowner's Sheet Anchor* is just the book that tells you and me, if we happen to own boats, how to make minor repairs, alterations, conversions, and even complete building. Diagrams and drawings illustrate types of boat for each man's purpose.

★ ★

☞Susan Glaspell's *The Road to the Temple*, a biography of her husband, George Cram Cook, who chose Greece above all other countries in which to live and to die, will be re-issued by Stokes in June. Miss Glaspell has written a new foreword. At the time the book came out in 1926 it reached respectable sales and served to re-introduce Greece and its people to many Americans. Edgar H. Wells & Co., dealers in rare books, are now located at 66 East 56th Street. ☞*The Astors*, Harvey O'Connor's account of America's first dynastic family, is announced for publication on April 14 by Knopf. Mr. O'Connor, biographer of the Mellons and the Guggenheims, follows the story of the Astors from the founding of the family fortune by the first John Jacob to the present. It is a story of money, of wealth acquired by traffic in furs and general trade with China, invested in New York real estate, and grown to fabulous proportions as the expanding city gave greater value to acres that had once been goat farms.

★ ★

☞From a subscriber of the *SRL*, apparently imbued with the ides of verse and Spring, comes this plaintive note:

I haven't paid the butcher
And I haven't paid the rent.
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112 - S	113 - E	114 - R	115 - G	116 - O	117 - A		118 - M	119 - I		120 - J	121 - G	122 - F	123 - X	124 - R	125 - P	126 - Y
127 - B		128 - B	129 - F		130 - F	131 - B	132 - J		133 - K	134 - R	135 - I	136 - M	137 - Y	138 - O	139 - P	140 - A
141 - S	142 - B		143 - R	144 - Y	145 - M	146 - A	147 - H	148 - Q		149 - Z	150 - E	151 - K	152 - L	153 - E	154 - M	155 - N
	156 - S	157 - N	158 - J	159 - B	160 - U		161 - H	162 - D	163 - K		164 - D	165 - U	166 - E	167 - C	168 - L	169 - K
	170 - T	171 - N	172 - H	173 - A		174 - H		175 - M	176 - A	177 - W	178 - G	179 - J	180 - I	181 - C	182 - Y	183 - Q
	184 - W	185 - C	186 - A	187 - O												

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1938 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 10 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Signal used to summon Clansmen to war (2 wds.; Scott.)

B. Macedonian generals who partitioned Alexander's Empire.

C. Opera by Wagner based on novel by Bulwer Lytton.

D. Partisan of mob-rule.

E. Report; piece of gossip (comp.)

F. Pseudonym of Marie Henri Beyle (1783-1842).

G. Alpine valley, Grisons, Switzerland.

H. One of the seven hills of Rome.

I. Master, Sir (Turkish title).

J. Barber and infamous Privy Councilor of Louis XI (nickname).

K. Renegade.

L. Steal, pilfer (slang).

M. Drama by Bulwer Lytton.

N. Slayer of Holofernes (Bib.)

O. Loose from a confining rope, etc.

P. Member of Bottom's players (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

Q. Reproached.

R. Admirer of a great Norwegian dramatist.

S. Slackly twisted worsted yarn for fancy work.

T. Spiteful.

U. D-Major symphony by Mozart (Köchel No. 385).

V. Short name for certain butter substitute.

W. Descendent of third son of Jacob and Leah.

X. Capital of ancient Egypt.

Y. Pass off without effect.

Z. American woman author (1812-96).

WORDS

186 176 173 146 35 8 140 82 117 75

127 128 69 142 105 159 131 36

48 185 67 167 181 59

51 164 39 65 76 80 83 162 53

153 166 113 150 38

26 130 40 129 62 54 44 122

121 115 68 79 101 178 30 14

172 147 161 89 37 174 72

119 77 135 102 108 58 180

86 132 71 158 64 120 179 55

169 133 78 163 111 90 97 151

13 92 168 99 152

70 145 175 118 96 34 100 136 154

3 63 23 171 155 157

4 57 138 20 116 50 187 66

74 94 31 2 125 139 45 61 103 88

109 46 19 32 148 9 183

28 16 143 114 134 7 49 124

98 43 112 156 141 18

17 170 60 87 27 10

160 165 52 106 91 22 93

29 12 85 47

184 73 177 56 6 81

1 110 41 24 95 123 15

182 21 107 144 11 84 25 137 126

5 104 42 149 33

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